

Appl. No. 09/488,469
Amdt. Dated July 21, 2004
Reply to Office Action of April 7, 2004

Attorney Docket No. 81752.0023
Customer No. 26021

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 22 of page 3 and ending at line 30 of page 3, with the following amended paragraph:

To attain the above object, there is provided an image forming method of
forming a main image and a background ~~image~~ image serving as a background of the main image by using colors each defined by a set of n-valued basic color gradation values each having any one of n possible values (n is an integer which is equal to or larger than 3) and defining a gradation value of a corresponding one of a predetermined set of basic colors, and synthesizing the main image and the background image, to thereby form a synthesized image.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 9 of page 6 and ending at line 11 of page 7, with the following amended paragraph:

According to the image forming method and device, a main image and a background ~~image~~ image serving as a background of the main image are formed using colors each defined by a set of n-valued basic color gradation values each having any one of n possible values (n is an integer which is equal to or larger than 3) and defining a gradation value of a corresponding one of a predetermined set of basic colors, and the main image and the background image are synthesized to thereby form a synthesized image. More particularly, a plurality of different main data items respectively representative of candidates for the background image are storing as background image data candidates, and a plurality of different sets of the n-valued basic color gradation values, which correspond to respective ones of the background image data candidates, are stored as candidates for a main image gradation value set of the n-valued basic color gradation values commonly applied

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to all valid pixels of the main image. An arbitrary one of the background image data candidates is set to a background image data item representative of the background image. Out of the candidates for the main image gradation value set, one corresponding to the background image represented by the background image data item is set to the main image gradation value set. A main shape image data item representative of a main shape image forming a shape of the main image is formed by assigning a validity-indicative one of predetermined two values to all pixels of the main shape image as the all valid pixels of the main image, and assigning an invalidity-indicative one of the predetermined two values to the remaining pixels of the main image. A synthesized image data item representative of the synthesized image is formed by synthesizing the main image and the background image based on a main image data item representative of the main image and the background image data item, the main image data item having the main image gradation value set and the main shape image data item.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 8 of page 29 and ending at line 14 of page 29, with the following amended paragraph:

Next, when the user depresses the print key 322 to thereby instruct a printing operation at step S70, an interrupt by the print key 322 is generated, as described above, and a print image starts to be formed. After the print ~~image~~ image is formed at step S80, the same is printed at step S90, followed by terminating the image-forming/printing process (S10) at step S110.

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Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 10 of page 60 and ending at line 1 of page 61, with the following amended paragraph:

For instance, FIG. 15B shows an example in which an image (plotted image) in the form of a graphical image representative of the hut is processed into a print image. In this case, similarly to the case of the FIG. 13 example being decomposed into the image elements in the FIGS. 14A to 14C, the plotted image is decomposed into image elements PB1, PB2, PB3 and PB4, as shown in FIGS. 16A to 16D, and the image-forming/synthesizing process is carried out on the image elements, whereby the plotted image can be printed as a print image PB0. In this case, when printing is instructed by the user as shown in FIG. 3 (S70) at a time main shape image data (not shown) of each of image elements and color palette data CPB0 CPB01 to CPB4 CPB04 in FIG. 15B have been prepared for processing, the print image PB0 shown in FIG. 15B is formed and printed (S80, S90), followed by terminating the image-forming/printing process (S110). A contour line of each image element in each figure is drawn for purposes of ease of understanding as described above, but not printed. Further, particularly in this example, it is possible to omit each process on the image element PB4 of a window whose printing color is specified to "white" (all the gradation values "0": mask number "0") (the same applies to windows in FIGS. 17 to 19 referred to hereinbelow: hence, contour lines of frames of the window in FIG. 16D are shown by dotted lines (imaginary lines).